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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001075

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#)
SUBJECT: VP ADEL ON APRIL 5 PCNS AND GOI OFFENSIVE AGAINST
JAM

REF: A. BAGHDAD 1065 (MALIKI SCORES BIG)
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 1066 (PCNS STATEMENT)

Classified By: Political Counselor Matt Tueller for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In an April 7 meeting, Vice President Adel Abdel Mehdi said political unity expressed in the April 5 meeting of the Political Council for National Security (PCNS) had built momentum for progress on several fronts, particularly the dissolution of the Jaysh al-Mehdi (JAM) and the return of Sunni Tawafuq ministers to the GOI. Adel said Maliki was considering a speech to the CoR as part of a larger effort to seize momentum in the GOI crackdown on JAM. Reading from notes, Adel set forth the broad outlines of an ongoing GOI offensive designed to finish off JAM. He said the GOI effort will focus on Sadr City and isolate and target JAM commanders and key figures. Describing Sadr City residents as "a potentially powerful weapon for the government," Adel said the GOI will seek to take advantage of the growing antipathy of ordinary citizens toward JAM and bring them to the GOI side, just as he claimed the people are doing in Basrah. Over the next few weeks, the GOI (in close coordination with Coalition Forces) will continue to surround Sadr City and conduct targeted raids before entering Sadr City in greater force and dividing the area into sectors to restrict movement. Adel closed the meeting by declaring the GOI "must win the battle for Sadr City, and I think it is feasible." End Summary.

PCNS Unity Creates New Momentum for Political Progress

[1](#)2. (C) Adel told NSC Senior Director for Iraq and Afghanistan McGurk that the only issue discussed in the 4-hour PCNS meeting on April 5 (reftels) was how to deal with the JAM militia. In the best Arab rhetorical tradition, Adel characterized the discussion and the written statement produced by the discussion as "direct, open, frank, transparent, objective, and detailed." He said Sadrists Trend representatives at the PCNS were "overwhelmed" by the unity of all other participants. While Trend officials began the meeting by speaking with harsh and accusatory words, by the end of the meeting they were "apologetic and asked us to help them and protect them" from militants within Sadrists ranks, saying "they will kill us if we say something." Adel said the Sadrists were told by the others that there is consensus that JAM must be dissolved and that the Trend cannot continue as both a mainstream political entity and an armed revolutionary group. In an April 7 press interview, Prime Minister Maliki echoed this sentiment by threatening to bar the Trend from participation in upcoming elections unless JAM is dissolved.

[1](#)3. (C) Adel said PCNS unity created new momentum for real progress, and McGurk pressed him to seize the opportunity. Adel listed possible steps forward as a Tawafuq return to the government, a real possibility since he said it was VP

Hashemi who drafted the PCNS statement point about Tawafuq's return; a more inclusive leadership approach by Maliki; and continued security and stability in the provinces. He noted that the Executive Council (comprised of Maliki and the Presidency Council) would meet later on April 7. McGurk asked Adel to encourage Maliki to address the CoR and brief on the way forward in dealing with armed criminal groups, and also to share his vision on investment and spending of the GOI's budget surplus. In addition, McGurk suggested that Adel discuss the strategic framework with the Executive Council, noting that we need an Iraqi green light to begin formal negotiations. McGurk again recommended that the Executive Council deputies would be an appropriate negotiating team - as the Executive Council Principals would be signatories to the document.

Outline of Plan to Take On JAM

14. (C) When asked how the GOI would accomplish JAM dissolution, Adel laid out the outlines of a GOI strategy that he predicted would be effective and cause minimal loss of life. Reading from notes, he said the effort has already begun with a consensus position among Iraq's political class that the Sadrists must pay a price for every transgression. He said the GOI effort will focus on Sadr City, not to "liberate" the area but rather to isolate and target JAM commanders and key figures. Describing Sadr City residents as "a potentially powerful weapon for the government," Adel said the GOI will seek to take advantage of the growing antipathy of ordinary citizens toward the Sadrists and bring them to the GOI side, just as he claimed the GOI is doing in Basrah. Over the next few weeks, the GOI (in close coordination with Coalition Forces) will continue to surround

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Sadr City and conduct targeted raids against arms caches and command elements. In time, the GOI will enter Sadr City in greater force, and then divide the area into sectors and restrict movement between sectors and access to and from the entire area, a process that will disrupt JAM communications and further isolate hard-core elements. At the same time, the GOI will reach out to residents "because thousands will surrender if we create the right moral and psychological conditions." Adel closed the meeting by stating that the GOI "must win the battle for Sadr City, and I think it is feasible."
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